

[abstract]

SUDAH IN CONTEMPORARY INDONESIAN

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The present paper is a sequel to Kaswanti (1978, 1979, 1984), but mainly addresses *sudah*. A possible explanation to unravel the meaning of *sudah* is, as Wolff et al. (1986) attempted to provide, ‘as of a certain point in time, by now’. It has to do with ‘something which is true at a particular point in time, but was not true in the past’, as exemplified with *Ali sudah kawin* ‘Ali is married.’ Another attempt is to attribute ‘perfective’ (as in (1)) to or to equate *already* (as in (2)) with *sudah*.

- (1) *Pertunjukan sudah mulai ketika kami sampai.*
The performance had already started when we arrived.
- (2) *Cepat, kita sudah terlambat.*
Hurry up, we’re already late.

The following instances, however, illustrate the untranslatability of *sudah* into either *already* or the perfective aspect or the past time in English. In constructions as follows *sudah* is mandatorily used.

- (3) He is married. ‘Ia **sudah** kawin.’
- (4) He is grown up now, almost an adult, but ... ‘Ia **sudah** besar sekarang ...’
- (5) He is on his own! I already gave my ‘don’t’ list! ‘Ia **sudah** mandiri ...’
- (6) Do you know ...? ‘**Sudah** tahu?’ [or ‘Tahu nggak?’, rather than *Tahukah (kamu/anda) ...?]
- (7) It’s time to go now. ‘**Sudah** waktunya kita pergi.’

The present paper is an attempt to elucidate the meaning of *sudah*, which syntactically disperses, as it does not only go with verbs and adjectives, but also with nouns (7), adverbial (of time), as in (8) and (9).

- (8) **Sudah** tiga tahun saya di Indonesia.
‘I’ve been in Indonesia for three years.’
- (9) Sekali pernah aku terbangun dan pergi mendekatinya. Bertanya:
“**Sudah** begini malam dan ibu masih mengaji juga?” (Pramoedya, 29)
‘Once I woke and went to her, asking, “It’s so late and you are still chanting?”’ (James Siegel)

References

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